

3. Simple humane custodial care, at a moderate expense for the incurable insane.

(*Popular Science Monthly* October, 1893.)

W. F. R.

THERAPEUTICAL.

Treatment of Neurasthenia by Injections of Nerve Extract.—Dr. C. Paul (*Medical Week*, Paris, April 28, 1893.)

In fifty-three observations in which this method of treatment was used, cure or marked improvement resulted. Dr. Paul's observations tend to show that the different parts of the nervous system are not equally affected in all cases of neurasthenia.

Sexual or genital neurasthenia stands next in frequency to the general or ordinary variety, in which the central or spinal symptoms predominate. In girls the genital variety is manifested in the form of chlorosis, coming on towards puberty.

In full-grown women it interferes with the successful treatment of uterine affections, which persist until the disappearance of the neurasthenia.

At birth neurasthenia often assumes a cardiac form in both sexes.

In males the genital neurasthenia may be manifested either by absence of sexual desire and impotence, or by spermatorrhœa. Neurasthenia seldom affects the stomach. Senile neurasthenia exists. The neurasthenia with hysteria, hypochondriasis or melancholia, is a complication of these affections, and only in exceptional cases influenced by injections. Neurasthenia may be brought on from overwork, but not by excessive walking. Neurasthenia follows excessive brain work and venereal excesses. Sleeplessness is the cardinal symptom. Injections of nerve extract produce sleep; sleep repairs wasted energies. Sleep is produced but for a few hours at first, but gradually the habit is restored and strength returns. In the failures—seven out of fifty-three cases—four were cases of hypochondriasis.

F. P. N.

Preparation of Extract for Treatment of Myxædema by Thyroid Juice.—Dr. J. A. Scott. Trans. Royal Academy of Medicine in Ireland, Dublin, 1893. (*The Medical Week*, Paris, May 5, 1893.)

The main point to be attended to is the absolute sterilization of everything. He touched neither the blades of his instruments nor the thyroid bodies with his hands.

On removal from the sheep, they were minced upon a board which was soaked in corrosive sublimate and then washed in phenol. They were then transferred to a sterilized glass capsule and brought from the abattoir and put into sterilized test-tubes and covered with equal parts of glycerine and a half per cent. solution of phenol. This extracted some of the organic principles in twenty-four hours, but not by any means all that might be obtained. A sterilized piece of linen was then placed in the cylinder of a syringe, the contents of the test-tube poured in and the piston forced down. Whatever was squeezed out was collected in a bottle. It is equally important to sterilize the skin of the patient when injections are made. F. P. N.

The Hypnotic Action of Somnal.—By Giovanni Memmo.—In the *Bulletino Allea Reale Accademia Medica di Roma*, anno xviii; fas. viii., the author sums up his experiences thus: In the insane we have obtained good results, especially in epileptic mania, paranoia, alcoholic psychoses, mania, etc. It has many times shown its superiority over chloral, sulfonal and trional because of its hypnotic action and because it was better tolerated and left no after-effects.

Sulfonal in the Treatment of the Insane.—Dr. John H. Scally (Maryland Hospital for the Insane) reports as follows concerning the action of sulfonal:

“In treatment at this hospital, sulfonal has been used for its hypnotic effect in the stages of excitement during attacks of acute mania, mania following epilepsy, recurrent mania, chronic mania, and also in melancholia.

“It has not been our custom to give it regularly each day, but only at those times when, owing to the extreme restlessness and motor excitability of patients, sleep is denied them. In the management of acutely maniacal patients just admitted, when it is necessary to secure immediate rest, and, as is often the case, when the patients' very lives demand it, sulfonal has not failed in any case in which it has been used. Given in drachm doses, preferably in whiskey, not only has it secured from six to eight hours of sound sleep, but it has produced quite a decided amount of motor sedation, lasting from eight to twelve hours after waking. In each case sleep was obtained within one hour after administration and in none was any bad after-effects noticed.

“Three of our cases, two being of acute mania and one epileptic mania, furnish evidence of the value of